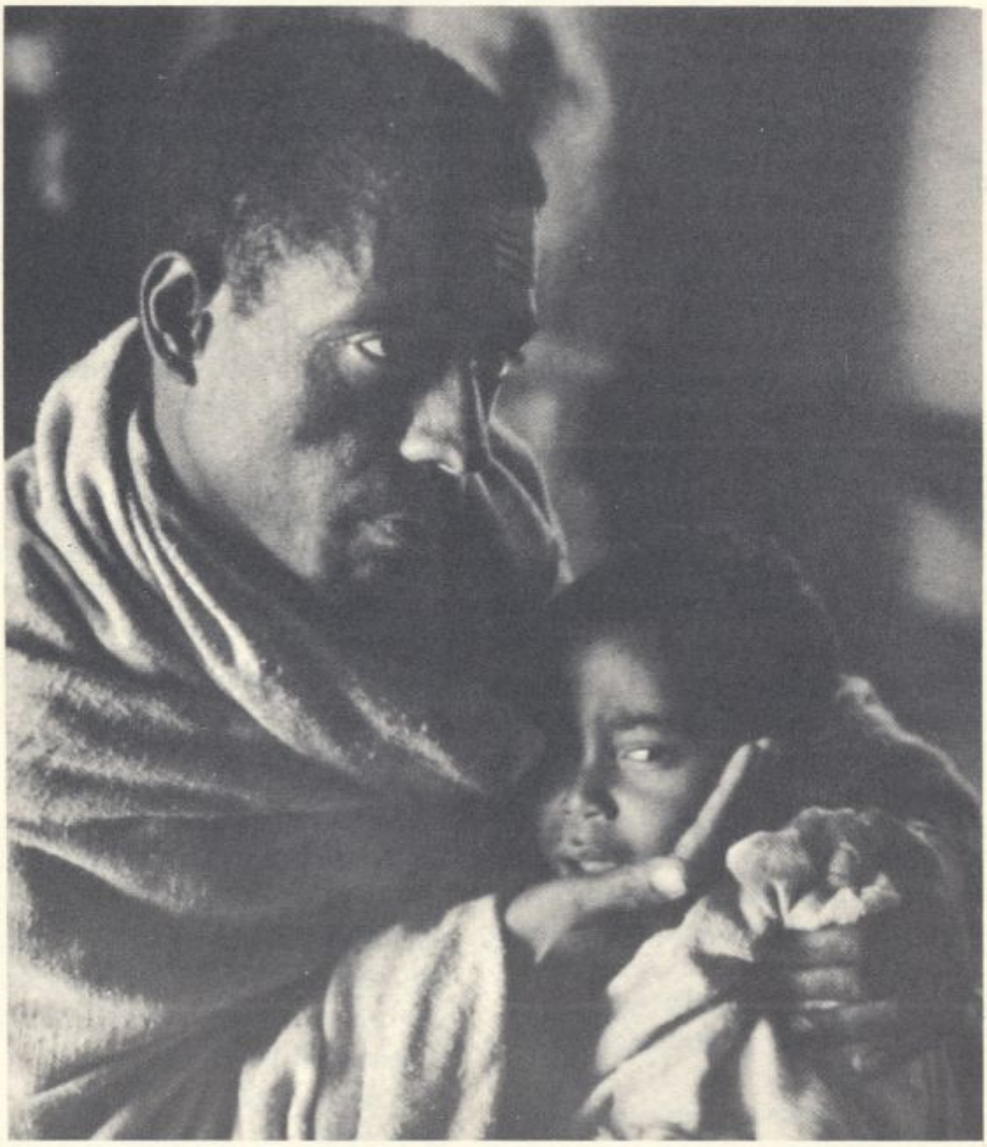
RESTORATION REVIEW



When shall there be no more upon the earth such wolves of hell that father and son may once again know peace?

LI T'AI - PO

See:
A WORLD TURNED BLACK
page 166

Volume 11, No. 9 **November, 1969**

Volume 11, No. 9 **Leroy Garrett, Editor** **November 1969**

Alexander Campbell's "Synopsis of Reform"

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

This question is more relevant than we might suppose, for it just may be that we have some serious misunderstandings about the nature of the gospel. Responses from across the country to a recent letter of mine in the *Christian Chronicle* convinced me that we would all do well to re-think the question *What is the gospel?* I made such statements as "The gospel is in the scriptures, but not to be identified with them." The responses made it clear that the common notion among our people is that the gospel is the whole of the *New Testament*. One is therefore preaching the gospel when he is expounding upon any biblical theme, rooted in the truths of the *New Testament.* My letter presented a different view from this.

There are severe implications to the position that the gospel consists in the teachings of the *New Testament*. If this is so, then for one to obey the gospel and become a Christian he must understand the whole of the New Covenant scriptures and obey them aright. If this is so, then fellowship among Christians, which is admitted by all to be based upon the gospel, is dependent on all of them seeing the Bible exactly alike. If this is so, then only he is a gospel preacher who preaches "the truth" on all the doctrines in the Christian scriptures. If this is so, then there was not a single apostle who preached the whole gospel, with the possible exception of John, for the *New Testament* was not completed until near the close of the first century. If this is so, the disciples in the primitive church heard only *part* of the gospel, for the scriptures were not complete until long after they passed on. If this is so, Paul could not have been right when he said, "I have fully preached the gospel of Christ," for part of the *New Testament* was not written until long after his death.

But there is even a more serious implication. If the gospel, which God gave for the salvation of the world, is a composition of all the doctrines in the scriptures, then we are left with an ambiguous message to proclaim to a lost world. Many of the teachings of the *New Testament* are unclear and difficult. Peter himself says of Paul's teachings: "There are some things in them hard to understand." Is the gospel which we are to proclaim to men with broken hearts and disturbed minds *hard to understand?*

When Jesus told his apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, are we to understand that he was speaking of all that comprises what we call the *New Testament?* If so, it was an impossible command, for most of them did not even live to see such an arrangement of scripture. And even had Jesus then and there handed them copies of the New Testament no two of them could have gone forth and preached the same thing, for they would have had divergent views of its meaning—just as we all do today.

Surely we can see that Jesus was referring to a specific message, a proclamation of certain heavenly facts to be believed. This is why Paul in 1 Cor. 1:21 spoke of the gospel as "the thing preached." This is why he could speak of "obeying the gospel," for the gospel is one thing and obeying it is something else. This is why he could say, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," for baptism is one thing, the gospel is something else. This is why he could refer to "the defense and confirmation of the gospel," for the gospel is one thing, while to defend it and confirm it are something else.

This is a problem that has long concerned the theological world. Recently I listened to tapes on a conference on the nature of the *kerugma* (gospel) held at Union Seminary in Richmond. The conferees were weighing the question as to whether, in the light of what *kerugma* really means, the church of today is truly preaching the gospel, even the great evangelists. They named several popular preachers, asking in each case *Is he kerugmatic?* They concluded that the preacher who is always moralizing, or didactic, or doctrinaire is not a *gospel* preacher. It is he that stresses the love, mercy, and grace of God as manifested in the Christ and who draws from events in the life of Jesus to underscore God's philanthropy to man who preaches the gospel.

This is to distinguish between *preaching* (kerugma) and *teaching* (didache), and the leaders at this conference recognized this distinction, pointing to the research of C. H. Dodd . as responsible for this being accepted in theological circles today.

It is noteworthy that Alexander Campbell, when he set down the essentials for restoration, was careful to define the gospel and to distinguish it from theories and doctrines. Indeed, though modern scholars are oblivious to the fact, he anticipated C. H. Dodd in his findings on *gospel* and *doctrine*.

Says Campbell in his *Synopsis of Reform:*

> *The gospel is not a theory, a doctrine, a system of moral or spiritual philosophy; not even the theory of faith, repentance, baptism, remission of sins, adoption, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.*

While he recognizes that faith, repentance and baptism are necessary for entrance into the Christian church, he insists that this is not the gospel. Nor is any theory of faith, repentance, baptism, justification, the Holy Spirit, etc. the gospel. Nor is any biblical presentation of these or any combination of these the gospel.

This does havoc to what many of us have been calling "gospel sermons." Campbell says that a clear, scriptural sermon on faith, repentance and baptism is not *gospel* preaching. It may of course be the truth, and even related to the gospel, and yet not be *the gospel.*

Then what is the gospel? Campbell makes the definition clear: "The gospel is the proclamation in the name of God of remission of sins and eternal life through the sacrifice and mediation of Jesus Christ, to everyone that obeys him in the instituted way."

In approaching the question in another way, he observes that the gospel is *the faith* as distinguished from *faith. The faith* is belief and trust in God's act of love through Christ. It is acceptance of the event of Christ in history. *Faith* on the other hand is belief or conviction regarding numerous teachings of the scriptures. One may believe that he should partake of the Lord's Supper each first day. This is *faith*, but no part of *the faith. The faith* is centered in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for our sins. One who accepts this has accepted *the faith,* even though he may be confused on many matters *of faith.*

Campbell says further of the nature of the gospel: "It is a clear, full, and authoritative statement of pardon and eternal life from the philanthropy of God through the interposition of Jesus in a positive institution."

He uses big words, doesn't he? He is saying that the gospel is the good news that man can be saved from his sin by way of God's loving act in giving Christ to the world. It would be proper to say therefore, Campbell being right, that when preaching deals with the theme of God's love through Christ it is *gospel* preaching.

It may now be clearer what we mean in saying that the gospel is *in* the scriptures but not to be identified with them. It is like saying that the gospel is the truth of God but not all the truth of God is the gospel. One might "preach" (*teach* is more accurate) the truth about many subjects without preaching the gospel.

The distinction between *preaching* and *teaching* is therefore most important. It is like the difference between enrolling students in school and instructing them in the curriculum, or in inducting soldiers and training them.

How does all this relate to unity of Christians and the fellowship of the saints? Our point is, as was Campbell's, that unity is based upon the person of Christ (the gospel), that when people believe in him and obey him in baptism they are one together. They are *one* when they are *won* by the gospel. Fellowship is the sharing of the common life that grows out of that relationship of oneness in Jesus.

On this matter there can be no ambiguity, no compromise, no reason for differences. If one believes in Jesus and is baptized, like Mark 16:16 says, he is one with all others who have so believed and obeyed. He is therefore in the fellowship when he believes the one *fact* (the gospel) and obeys the one *act* (baptism which is the response to the gospel).

This should answer the charge that is often made that some of us who are pleading for a deeper sense of fellowship believe in "fellowshiping anybody and everybody." Yes, we believe "anybody and everybody" that is *in Christ* (through faith and obedience) are our brothers and within the fellowship.

We further contend, again with brother Campbell, that fellowship is not contingent upon conformity of belief in matters of doctrine. It may be contingent upon *sincerity,* but men can be sincere and still hold different views about many points of doctrine (which we distinguish from *the gospel*). This is why we have been saying that we can hold different

views about all the things that keep us divided—whether music, classes, serving the Supper, premillennialism, pastor system, cooperative enterprises—and still enjoy fellowship in Christ together. It is because all these things are, more or less (mostly *less*) related to the *didache* (doctrine), which is *not* the basis of unity, and not related to the *kerugma* (gospel) which *is* the basis of unity.

Then this means we may be in the fellowship with a man who is in error?, we are asked. Yes and No. It depends on what the error is. The man who is in error about Christ, such as believing that he was a great man but still only a man, or one who refuses to yield himself to Christ by being baptized, cannot be considered within the fellowship, for God has not "called him into the fellowship of his Son through the gospel," as the apostle puts it.

The answer is *Yes* we may enjoy unity with the brother who holds erroneous views about various points of doctrine. Who of us does not? Who will stand up and say he is *right* on all the teachings of scripture? A brother's error may be serious, so serious that it places strains upon the shared life in Jesus (fellowship), and for this reason we should be concerned and do what we can to correct it through loving tender care. But such error does not itself nullify the fellowship. It did not in the case of Paul and Peter, who had rather serious differences.

When then is fellowship disrupted?, we are asked. In two circumstances according to the scriptures: when a brother becomes a heretic and when a brother *leads* a life of immorality. I say *leads* such a life, like the fornicator at Corinth, but not the brother who unintentionally errs out of weakness. The heretic is the insincere troublemaker who is intent upon injuring the body of Christ for his own selfish gain.

If those who read this article are in Christ, then they are my brothers beloved. Our being one in Christ and sharing in him the common life of love does not depend upon our agreeing upon what is set forth here. While I think it a serious error to confuse the nature of the gospel, which explains why I am writing as I am, men may hold such divergent views and still be brothers together. So with all these other things that have cursed us through the years by harangues and debates. Some of them may be serious errors and others not so serious. But whether serious or not, such differences cannot be allowed to impair the communion of saints.

And it is in *that* state, in the relationship of love, goodwill, and brotherhood, that we are more likely to achieve more conformity of viewpoint which in some instances is surely important, rather than in that context where we separate into warring camps and have a big debate.

It is in the former spirit that I write to you now, within the context of the communion of the saints, for I *do* believe very strongly that it is vitally important that we come to understand the true nature of the gospel. I share with Alexander Campbell the conviction that clarification in this area will save us from a legion of woes.—*the Editor.*

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

A WORLD TURNED BLACK

This little journal has a certain personal character about it. Far from being a denominational organ, it is based to a large degree, for good or ill, upon the personal experiences of the editor. For this reason I have from time to time shared with my readers some of my unusual experiences, especially those that I believe have something to say to our troubled world. These are drawn not only from my thinking about various controversial issues, but sometimes from my family and professional life.

So through 18 years of publication there have been stories about each of our children as we adopted them, descriptions of my tour around the world, accounts of my life at Harvard, and even essays on such bizarre experiences as a ride in a broken down ambulance in Dallas and incarceration at Henderson, Tenn., to name only a few.

Ouida's mother, upon learning that her daughter was indeed going to take the dubious step of marrying me, assured her: "Well, as Leroy's wife you may die of excitement, but one thing sure you'll never die of boredom." For some reason I keep hearing that quoted through the years! Life has truly been exciting, for I have often ventured out to the edge of things, and as an editor I am pleased to share such experiences with those who care to read me.

This experience about my world turning black is one that I have been waiting many months to tell, waiting for the experience to solidify so that I could write with more knowledge of it. It has certainly been one of my most unique experiences, but one that is not easily interpreted. So I have hesitated to put it into words. After all, how is one to describe his world when it suddenly turns black?

Most of my readers know that for years I was professor of philosophy at Texas Woman's University. But I have not yet recorded the fact that I am no longer on that faculty and am now teaching at Bishop College in Dallas. This change occurred in September 1968, so it has now been well over a year since I have moved into my new black world. You see, Bishop is a Negro college, having in recent years moved to the big city from a small East Texas town. Under imaginative leadership, it is striving for excellence in education amidst serious handicaps, seeking to become not a good *black* college but a good college.

I came in contact with Bishop's president, Milton Curry, by virtue of being president of the TWU chapter of the American Association of University Professors. Each year our chapter had a joint dinner meeting with the chapter at North Texas State University, also in Denton, at which time we have a speaker of some prominence. I persuaded those concerned to invite President Curry to talk to us about the *education of Negroes.* (I have learned to put it that way and not *Negro education,* for there is no reason why a black person's education should be different from a white person's.)

This handsome, stately, highly educated Negro made such an impression on the white professors present that the reaction was instantaneous: *it was the best program we'd ever had!* It was obvious that most of them had not had any previous professional contact with a black man who was as cultured and educated as themselves. Sitting with President Curry at the speaker's table, I was able throughout the evening to learn even more about his work and his dreams for Bishop College.

As a result of the president's appearance several of the abler professors at NTSU agreed to teach as Bishop on a part-time basis, and at President Curry's invitation I decided to join his faculty on a full-time basis as professor of philosophy. I have since been commuting to Dallas from Denton, not having yet moved into Dallas.

Almost all of the 1900 students are Negro (a sprinkling of whites and orientals) and two-thirds of the faculty. It has proved to be a most interesting perspective from which to view our many deep-rooted social problems related to race. To say that it is an eye-opening experience is to put it mildly. I wish I could report that it has answered for me the many questions we face in regard to racial conflicts, but I cannot. I have taught special classes for the gifted and for the drifters, both high school and college; and I have taught all girls as well as the coed setup; and in the small college as well as the university. Now it is all-black. Still many of the answers I seek in reference to life's greatest adventures elude me. I know not as I ought to know.

I know of no problem that the usual college has that a black college does not have. The black college has the usual problems plus still others, and the more serious problems at the ordinary college are even more serious at black institutions. If any young educator is interested in creating his own "Peace Corps" or in being a missionary to Africa, I have a suggestion on how he can do so in short order: *give himself to the education of the black man right here in America.*

This suggestion is especially well advised in view of the fact that there is now a premium on the Negro educator, for even southern universities are recruiting black professors. It is the thing to do, you know. They want to prove that they are liberal! The result is that the black institutions are going to have to have more help from white educators or be left out. This is to say that the young white teacher will have more and

more opportunities to join black institutions, if he will but prepare himself in heart as well as mind for the challenge.

The most serious problem in a black institution, apart from the usual monetary headaches that plague all colleges, are those that grow out of social deprivation. Take the simple problem of an inferiority complex, which we all have and which may not be so simple after all. Well, the black student has a feeling of inadequacy that defies description, especially in the presence of a white professor. One would suppose that the feeling is deep inside his genes and reaches far back into the history of the black man. Considering the Negro's unfortunate past, it is a fact that he *is* inferior, not from a natural incapacity but for lack of opportunity for cultural maturation.

If one has convinced himself (it may often be *unconscious*) that he cannot learn difficult material, he is defeated before he starts. To say the least, feelings of inferiority, whether justified or not, loom as a serious obstacle to one's education. I have noticed it especially in teaching logic to black students, a difficult subject anywhere. In going over something like the fallacy in a syllogism, again and again, and am still faced with *blankness* as well as blackness, I am led to conclude: *the student supposes that it is beyond him.* While I have through the years had some confidence in my ability as a teacher, I have recently walked out of classes, subdued and chastened, and saying to myself: *I thought I knew how to teach!*

Coupled with the problem of feeling inadequate is the failure to concentrate. I am convinced that the ability to concentrate long and hard is mostly a matter of habit. It is a response to the many challenges through the years that most black students simply haven't had. Classroom pressures and stiff competition build the habit of concentration, mental disciplines that are too often lacking in poorer schools. Getting and holding attention is hard to come by with black students, especially when the material is for them unplowed ground.

Cultural deprivation is therefore a problem of incalculable proportions. It is the stem that holds a cluster of other problems: inability to read and write well, lack of motivation, lack of mental discipline, not knowing how to study, limited interests, absenteeism, lack of punctuality, laziness. It is the bird that never learns to fly that is caught by the cat. It is fatal for a builder to erect the superstructure without laying his foundation.

It is now general knowledge that today's college student is beset with serious emotional and personal problems. This is especially true with the Negro student. It is financially as well as academically difficult for him to get to college. His parents are nearly always uneducated and therefore unprepared to support and encourage his venture. There is often an indifference and even hostility toward education on the part of the family. Frequently there is but one parent in a broken home. If not broken, it is troubled by strife, ignorance, poverty, crime, and violence.

Besides all this he is black, with all that means in white America. A psychiatrist at Columbia University published a book recently entitled *Black Suicide* that reveals a high percentage of suicides among Negro youth. He says: "It is most apparent that the murderous rage and self-hatred that mark their suicide attempts are an integral part of their racial experience and form a part of the burden of being black in America."

Having entered my black world from a woman's university where nearly every student was white, I soon found myself comparing females. Not that one has to teach in a girls' college to do that! (For years I was told by men who learned I taught at a woman's university, *That is where I want to teach!* and usually they were not even teachers!) I found some, though not as many, who were just as smart, and many who were just as pretty and charming as girls anywhere. One day in particular I found myself observing with special interest two or three of the girls who were sitting and talking with each other while waiting for my philosophy class to start. They had all that attractive women are suppose to have: poise, intelligence, beauty, and pardon me for saying so in this journal, sex appeal. It must have been the newness of my black world that caused me to then have something of an existential experience. A kind of shocking and depressing thought overwhelmed my consciousness: *They are black! They are black!* I thought of them as little girls growing up, the time when they discovered that being a Negro made a big difference, their home life in a segregated neighborhood, their dating, their school days in black (perhaps ghetto) schools; the time they'll go out to find employment; the time they'll get married, have babies and build homes. *They are just like those sweet TWU girls,* I was saying to myself, *except that they are darker.* I found myself beginning to realize what it means to be a Negro. But I was uncomfortable. It saddened me, those lovely girls. I felt both a sense of guilt and frustration. *Black!* I thought. *Why in man's long, weary history has that made such a difference?*

All of us have of course had some contact with Negroes through the years, but I now am made to realize how limited mine have been, and I suppose I have been a typical white man in this regard. The first Negro I remember seeing was one on horseback near our rural home in Mineral Wells, Texas. I was but 5 or 6 years old, and I was so impressed by the sight that I ran all the way home to tell Mother about it. In all my growing up I was never in a black man's home nor was a black ever in our home, except on those very rare occasions when they were hired to do some work, which was very rare indeed since we were almost as poor as they were. I was almost grown before I realized that a "Nigger shooter," our name for a slingshot, had any reference to Negroes.

I recall how my dear Mother, who had no way of knowing better, would correct me for referring to a female Negro as a *lady.* I was to say *woman.* The few times Negroes had any business at our house, it was understood that they would call at the back door. I was impressed that Mother would boil the drinking glass used by the yard man and consider it virtually unusable for any other purpose. I distinctly recall scrutinizing the glass on one

occasion to see if I could detect any black on it! It is easy enough to see how I got the idea that about the worse thing that could happen to a person would be to be born black.

I have been going to Churches of Christ since I was a babe in arms, but I never saw a black person in any congregation ever, and never heard a black minister until I went away to our colleges, which introduced me to *one* such person—Marshall Keeble. At Freed-Hardeman there was a huge Negro named Spence who had served the college as janitor since its founding. We students thought we'd honor the old Negro with a birthday present, to be received before the students in assembly. President Hardeman thought the gift was all right, but ruled that it would be inappropriate to present it to him in chapel. I got the idea that it would be inappropriate because he was black, not because he was the janitor; and I do not recall questioning it. A while afterwards brother Hardeman went to the Negro church in Henderson to preach at Spence's funeral. The benevolent gesture impressed me, for surely only an unusually good man would preach a Negro's funeral.

In all my days at Freed-Hardeman and Abilene, including all my church life, I recall no issue ever being raised about social justice and the Negro. Other than an occasional missionary-minded youth who wanted to go to Africa, it was as if the Negroes did not exist. It was not until I went away to study at Princeton and Harvard that I ever sat in the same classroom with a Negro.

I grew to manhood with the notion that the blacks were somewhat less persons than were whites. A tragedy on the highway might be viewed with horror, but still minimized by the fact that "It was only a bunch of Niggers." Most of the preachers who influenced my younger years acknowledged that Negroes had souls like the rest of us, but it was a subject that *could* be debated. In all my contacts with some of our leading preachers in those formative years, not once did I witness any social intercourse between white and Negro ministers, not even so much as sitting down in the same room to eat. I recall one conversation with a noted minister as to what should be done if a Negro brother called late at night at your door with no place to stay. It was a *cold* night, I remember, which seemed to intensify the dilemma. It was resolved that it would be unchristian to turn him away. He should be allowed in and a pallet bed should be made for him in the living room!

With the passing of the years there has been little or no change from this picture insofar as our congregations are concerned. Even now a visit to all our *white* churches would hardly bring into view a single black person, and I know of no *black* church that has even the first white person as a member. We are as segregated as ever. A Negro did not enroll in any of our Christian colleges until long after the supreme court decision and the conformity of state universities made it "appropriate." Somehow it was always appropriate through the years for us to send missionaries to Africa.

So my America is a *white* America, and it was a white world out of which I stepped when I became a part of the Bishop community. I am integrated for the first time in my life. My bosses are black and my colleagues are black as well as white. All the problems and issues that concern this little world nestled in the hills of south Dallas are irrevocably tied in with the black man's predicament throughout the nation.

A look at political concerns will illustrate how these Negroes are a culture set apart from the rest of Dallas. In a straw vote on this campus Humphrey got 96%, Nixon 4%, and Wallace 0%, and that in a city that went substantially for Nixon *both* times that he ran, and where the Alabamian did so well that the black folk had just as soon forget it. Life on this hill will convince one of the truths of Gov. Kerner's report to President Johnson on civil disorders that this nation is rapidly solidifying into two separate cultures, one white and one black. And in this city of more than a thousand churches that profess Christ, more than a hundred of which are Churches of Christ, the blessed example of Jesus seems to have made little difference.

There is no question but what Jesus would (and probably did) wash the black man's feet. He died for him on the cross. He has gone to prepare a place for us—one that will presumably be integrated. And yet Dallas, with all of its Christians, is the purveyor of two distinct cultures—one white and one black. It is not the point to criticize, for it is a situation into which we were born. The tragedy is that we seem content to leave it the way we find it. We feel no constraint, not even as disciples of Jesus, to use our homes, our businesses, our churches to correct the wrong.

Life on this campus has impressed upon me what might be called the *sensitivity* of the black man. They are a people who have been deeply hurt, and their feelings are a mixture of fear, hate, resentment, and resignation. The sensitivity seems to show up in the courses that I teach more than they normally would, for philosophy deals with social ethics and questions related to life's meaning. I do not always relate successfully, failing sometime to present controversial ideas with sufficient tact. After one class I was told "You're like the rest of white folks," and once an irate militant accused me of being a racist in my presentation.

The occasion was a lecture I had given on Edmund Burke, the British economic philosopher that I identified as "the champion of conservatism." I pointed to Burke's view that reckless and irresponsible revolt is more damaging to society than "the Establishment," however insipid and sterile it may become. Reform should take place *within* the institutions, not from without. A conservative like Burke believes in *conserving* the values that one finds in the existing establishments, whether in religion or politics. I observed that the revolt against the modern church is mostly *liberal* in nature in that it is willing to destroy the church and start over. I referred to my concern for my own religious

communion. “I shouldn’t leave it,” I told the class, “but stay with it and seek to improve it from within.” This is what Burke is saying.

I showed how Burke warned against the idea that one can build utopias in this world, for bliss will be only in heaven. Change must come slowly if it is to be for the ultimate good of all, and one must face the fact that human nature is such that there will always be some injustices. By working patiently within the existing social structures we can gradually reduce the evils, though never completely eliminate them. It is folly to destroy the progress of a thousand years only to displace it with something new and untested.

Though Burke was attacking those responsible for the French Revolution, this black militant supposed it was all aimed at him. “That was a racist lecture,” he told me. “You were saying, ‘Nigger, be quiet and be satisfied with what you’ve got.’”

I pointed out to him that the Negro’s progress in this country has been on the basis that Burke was talking about: *through the existing political order*, such as the courts and congress (the very systems that some seek to destroy). But I could not get him to agree that there had been any progress for the blacks.

Such thinking is however in the minority, even among the blacks. Most people around here realize that education is the answer to the Negro’s problems. Various measures may momentarily bring respite, but it is only when the black man can compete with others in the free market that he will emerge victorious, and this can come only with education. And education takes lots of time, even when many people are lending a helping hand.

Only the Other day a student who is having lots of trouble understanding the materials I assign in philosophy walked haltingly into my office. He was black black and had that forlorn look, as if he had just walked out of a Mississippi cotton field. “I just want you to know that I’m trying, but its real hard for me.” I had given him an F for the midterm report and he was worried. I explained to him that lots of people in all colleges have trouble with philosophy and that he must not be discouraged, that I would help him. He was trying to control his emotions, I could tell, but a few tears rolled down his cheek, which for some reason came from but one eye.

Something tugged at my insides as he stood there, eager to achieve but with limited equipment. I thought of the words of Jesus: “I have come not to be ministered to, but to minister. I cannot think of a better place to minister for Jesus than in the classroom—a *black* classroom.

Perhaps that is the answer I should have given to some girls who were asking me one day after class why I left a state university to come to Bishop. Well, I was in no humour to talk to them about educational challenge and stuff like that. “Was it for more money?”, asked one of them with a scrutinizing look into my eyes. “I wouldn’t say so,” I answered. “Then why?”, they insisted.

“Let’s just say that it is because I love you,” I quietly replied.

They backed away a few feet as if to be able to size me up a little better. “Really? . . . Really?”, they said with disbelief. Having learned that it is difficult around here to deal with distrust toward the white man, I merely turned back towards them as I was walking away, and said:—*Really!*
—*the Editor*

I believe in the dignity of labor, whether with head or hand; that the world owes every man an opportunity to make a living.—*John D. Rockefeller, Jr.*

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

THE BURNING OF WITCHES

By Don Reece

This article is in reference to the Unity Forum at the Church of Christ in West Islip, New York, which was attended by members of the Restoration Movement of various views and practices, and which was reported in the July 14, 1969 issue of the *Christian Chronicle;* and it is in response to an article entitled *Fraternizing in the Forum*, and published in a prominent brotherhood publication. It is also in response to some things which were more implied than said in a Texas publication, and to the attacks which have recently been made on Campus Evangelism and on the *Christian Chronicle* in various publications.

Like the brother who wrote the first named article, I, too, am disturbed about some of the things which some are endorsing. And like him, I am of the conviction that some of the things which were said in the West Islip Unity Forum are, to say the least, untenable. But, disturbed as I am about these things, I am more disturbed about the remedy which he suggests—that all of our brethren who hold views at variance with those that are generally accepted by the brotherhood, or who extend the bounds of their fellowship wider than do most brethren, ought to be “soberly repudiated” and disfellowshipped.

This suggestion, if adopted, would strike at the very heart of one of the most cardinal principles which was taught by the men who pioneered the Restoration Movement and upon which it was originally launched, namely the principle of *the right of free inquiry and of private judgment.* This principle was expressed by Brother Elias Smith in these words: “The Holy Scriptures are the only sure, authentic and infallible rule of faith and practice; the name Christian is the only proper one for the believer; in all essentials the scriptures are plain to be understood; every Christian is free to examine the Scriptures for himself

and to impartially judge of the sense and meaning of the same; every Christian has a right to publish and vindicate what he believes is contained in the Scriptures, and to serve God according to his own conscience." (See *North Atlantic Christian, April/May* 1962, *page* 122.) On the same point, Brother Thomas Campbell says in *The Declaration and Address* "That . . . nothing ought to be inculcated upon Christians as articles of faith; nor required of them as terms of communion, but what is taught and enjoined upon them in the word of God. Nor ought anything to be admitted, as of Divine obligation, in their Church constitution and managements, but what is expressly enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles . . ." and "That although inferences and deductions from Scripture premises, when fairly inferred, may be truly called the doctrine of God's holy word, yet are they nor formally binding upon the consciences of Christians farther than they perceive the connection, and evidently see that they are so; for their faith must not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power and veracity of God."

I would suggest to our brother that, if the brotherhood consensus as to what the Bible teaches on a given point or as to who can be fellowshipped is to be taken as a norm from which no Christian can dissent, then we have gone the full cycle and are right back where the Presbyterians were in the days of Thomas Campbell.

We say to people; "We bind on you nothing but the New Testament." If what we really mean is "We bind on you nothing but the New Testament, *but* we reserve the right to determine for you *what* it teaches on any point of dispute, and woe be unto you if your own study of it should lead you to differ from out determination!" then would it not be more honest to say that, and perhaps to call an assembly of all the faithful brethren (if anyone knows who the faithful brethren are!) and to decide what the true faith is down to the finest points, to write it out point by point and number it article by article, and to hand each incoming member a copy of it.

Our brother says, "I, for one, would like it clearly stated and widely known that those who were there (at West Islip, N.Y.) did not represent me or the mainstream of the brotherhood of the churches of Christ." Well, I am one of these mainstream Church of Christ brethren, and I would like it equally clearly stated and equally widely known that *he* did not speak for *me* when he proposed that these brethren be "soberly repudiated." As I read such articles and listen to the charges and countercharges that are being made in the church today, I thank God more and more for two things—first, that he reserved the business of adding to the church to himself (Acts 2:38) and did not entrust it to any of us; and second, that no matter who we may regard as being in the church (or out of it), no matter who we may recognize as a Christian (or refuse to recognize), and no matter who we may fellowship, we still have the assurance of the Holy Spirit that "the Lord knows those who are his." (2 Timothy 2:19)

Our brother asks further, “How can we be led to unity by men who were rabid ‘Anti-located preacher,’ ‘Anti-Christian college,’ and ‘Anti-preach to the church fifteen years ago. . .?” Is it not quite probable that some of these “rabid Anti” brethren, having pushed the principle of breaking fellowship with everyone with whom we may disagree to its logical conclusion, have seen the bitter fruits of this kind of thinking and have, perhaps, learned something in the process? At least it appears to me from a causal reading of some of their own literature that this is their own analysis of the change in their thinking and attitude. And without intending to imply for one minute that most of us would agree with all of the conclusions which they have reached, I would nonetheless venture to suggest that, if we would stop throwing rocks at them long enough to listen to what they are trying to tell us, *we* might learn something from *their* experience.

The Restoration Movement was launched some one hundred and fifty years ago. Since then we have suffered no less than seven or eight major divisions. Most of these have occurred because one or both parties to some dispute have insisted that those with whom they differed must be disfellowshipped. To say the least, this is a tragic history for a movement which started out with the grand objective of uniting all Christians in *one* body! It is said that the visitor to Westminister Abbey may read these words chiseled in a stone of the floor: “May the rich blessings of God rest on every one—be he Englishman, American, or Turk—who will help to heal the open sores of the world.” And as I look at our poor divided brotherhood I am moved to exclaim: And may the rich blessings of God rest on every brother be he mainstream, left stream, or rightstream—who will bind up the wounds in the Restoration Movement and who will heal the open sores in the body of Christ!

“And it is time,” says our brother, “for faithful brethren to stand up and speak out.” Yes, it *is.* When a paper that has given to the brotherhood such yeoman service as has the *Christian Chronicle* is characterized as a “liberal tool” simply because it doesn’t slant its reporting the way someone thinks it should (a funny word—that word “liberal!”)Everybody seems to be using it these days but nobody bothers to define it!) When the practice of branding anything or anybody with whom we may differ as a “liberal” without bothering to say what we mean by “liberal” is becoming more and more prevalent When sitting down with those with whom we differ and trying to resolve those differences is characterized as “‘dialogue’ with the devil and his disciples”When good brethren, who are concerned about the plight of the Negro and of the poor and downtrodden, and who are trying to get the church to speak out against “Jim Crow” and racial and economic oppression and to stand up and be counted on the side of plain right and human decency, are branded as modernist and freethinkers by implied guilt-by-association tactics—When things as widely divergent as the modernism of Unitarians and the involvement of some brethren in the struggle for human rights is discussed in the same general context and the impression is left that such involvement is wrong on principle—And when one comes with

a proposal that brethren who don't think just like we think they ought to think or fellowship just who we think they ought to fellowship be "soberly repudiated" it is indeed time for all faithful brethren to speak out!

It would appear that we have among us some who are determined to mould a brotherhood consensus, and then to drive from the brotherhood, or discredit as "liberals," all who do not agree with them. I may be wrong in this, and I pray to God that I am, but from such articles as those considered, it would seem that this is the direction in which the thinking of some is headed. And if it is, and we have among us those who are thinking of going on a "witch hunt," then it is most assuredly time for all among us who cherish our Restoration heritage of Gospel Liberty to speak Out before they succeed in binding on the Churches of Christ a minutely detailed statement of faith which, albeit unwritten, is as destructive of *the right of free inquiry and private judgment* as were the confessions of faith of a century and a half ago. May God give us eyes to see it before it is too late.—Rt. 3, Radford, Va. 24141

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

READERS' EXCHANGE

Operation Toledo

Floyd Rose, who ministers to the Ridgewood Church of Christ in Toledo, Ohio (1818 Ridgewood Ave.), was part of the Fourth Annual Unity Forum held last summer in West Islip, N.Y. Concerning the forum he wrote: "For the first time in my life I thoroughly felt that I was among Christians who truly believe that in Christ there is no racial, cultural, social or class distinctions." In the same letter he tells of plans of establishing an integrated congregation in Toledo that will have as its mission the slum areas of the city. "Operation Understanding" will be similar to the inner-city work done by West Islip and will use some of the same people.

Floyd Rose is a black man and Ridgewood is a black congregation. Their plans are an exciting departure from the usual real estate ventures. They are concerned with priceless souls and broken hearts rather than million dollar structures and pretentious budgets. But they do need financial help. I commend these people to you, those of you looking for an opportunity to give money to something truly Christian. Why not write Floyd and let him tell you about it?

Pat Boone Speaks His Mind!

For years some of the brethren have been riding Pat Boone, now for kissing the girls on camera and now for playing the role of a drunk. But the latest is his appearances on the TV —programs of Oral Roberts and Rex Hubbard, and for this Foy L. Smith in *First Century Christian* takes him to task, accusing him of alliance with false teachers. I usually pass over the strikes at Pat with hardly a glance, but there was something different about this one, for Fay, who is a longtime friend of Pat, includes a letter from the star himself. It makes interesting reading, and it is one more illustration that our people are beginning to talk back to those who assume clerical prerogatives. Here is Pat Boone's letter to Foy Smith:

> I appreciated the concern that prompted your letter and article. I received a lot of reaction, *pro* and *con*, since the television appearances. My aim, of course, was to make my own Christian statement and affirm my faith in Jesus before some estimated five million people. I felt that this opportunity was too momentous to pass up because of some doctrinal difference I might have with Oral. In addition to this, my father-in-law, the late Red Foley had been a longtime personal friend of Oral's and Oral had asked me to come on to tell my feelings about Red and discuss our warm relationship that began with my courtship of his daughter.
>
> I say again, I understand your concern and I share some of it with you, but personally I've quit assuming that I know God's mind so intimately that I can say with assurance what He is or is not pleased with. If you remember, Jesus refused his disciples' request to forbid others who were preaching in His name because the disciples said "they are not of us." I certainly would differ with Oral on some points, but I cannot tell you that God is displeased with him for his beliefs, or with me for being on Oral's show, for the simple reason I am not God.
>
> It was with the prayerful consent of my Elders that I made this appearance and we have all earnestly prayed that God would use this appearance for good.

This did not satisfy Foy Smith. He suggests that this "new thinking" on the part of Pat and Shirley Boone may be related to the death of Red Foley, Shirley's father. Anyway they are now "witnessing" for Jesus and Shirley has been radiating her love for the "real" Jesus. As for Pat's not knowing the mind of God and therefore unwilling to judge Oral Roberts, brother Smith has the pat answer, even if it isn't Pat's. The Bible reveals the mind of God, we take the Bible for what it says, and so we know the mind of God. "If Pat doesn't know what God is pleased with or not pleased with, then he needs to study the New Testament," says Foy with apparent seriousness. It is just that simple!

Well, I will only say that the Foy Smiths had better hurry, for the day for this kind of obscurantism in Churches of Christ is about over.

The New Upsurge

It seems there is a new upsurge of Christians who are disgusted and disappointed and shaking off the sectarianism of Church of Christism; I hear of this from every angle. It is wonderful to be free from the shackles of sectarianism, even in the Church of Christ, and know you can think for yourself, without worrying about the payroll.—*Germany*

I agree with you: a sense of humor is virtually non-existent with our brethren. You did give me inspiration for an article which is still in the formative stages now, but I'll let you see it when it's done.

Incidentally, for my trouble, you needn't proffer a hot dog, a coke, or a bag of popcorn. I'd rather a donation be made to the Reuel Lemmons and B. C. Goodpasture retirement funds.—*Texas*

Some of your work I agree with and some I disagree. I read after I get in bed and I find places I would like to ask questions about if I was with you. But being an elderly woman I forget my questions.—*California* (82 years old and still growing!)

I appreciate your interest in healing our shattered Brotherhood. I hope and pray it will come about. I hope I can help it to come about.—*California*

Always remember that there are a great many who are praying for you.—*New Mexico*

There are certain "gospel" papers I like to take because they are a perfect fit for my bird cage, but your paper does not fit this category. I not only read yours but I *keep* them as well.—*Texas*

I see many encouraging signs across the horizon.—*California* (a traveling evangelist, non-mainline variety)

I have just discovered *Restoration Review* in our school library, and I have begun reading as many of the back issues as we have available. A group of concerned students here at ..... have begun an "underground" effort on our campus, and I was pleased to find many of our views expressed in your publication. I realize the dangers inherent in dealing with God's dynamite and in bucking the establishment, but I pray that only God's purposes might be furthered and only good comes from our efforts.—*somewhere in Midwest*

Front Page in Nashville

Nashville may be our only city that covers its entire county, and that county (city) has more Churches of Christ in it than any other in the world. So we might be expected to make the front page of the *Nashville Tennessean* occasionally. It happened when John McRay, teacher at Lipscomb College, resigned his position as minister of the Otter Creek con*gregation* because of a "Tongues" dispute. Several in the congregation were speaking in tongues in private meetings in homes. The minister preached against tongue speaking

and otherwise used his influence to stop it, all to no avail. He found the elders not only unwilling to invade the private experiences of those involved, but even sympathetic with the claims of spiritual renewal. So the preacher called it quits. They tell it around Nashville that John McRay was under pressure from the college officials to straighten out that tongues thing or get out. It all sounds like a case of a congregation winning its freedom from both clericalism and institutionalism. It is happening these days, you know.

Back Issues

I can hardly wait to read the back issues of *Restoration Review*.—*Oklahoma*

You may also have the privilege of reading back issues of this journal, for we have them on hand dating back to 1959. Two of our prize numbers, for instance, are those with Carl Ketcherside's essays on *The Ground of Christian Fellowship* (Third Quarter, 1963) and *Agape Foundation of Christian Fellowship* (Second Quarter, 1963) . There are many other exciting subjects along through the years. The quarterly issues (prior to 1964) are 35 cents, of which we have but 9; while the monthly issues (since 1964) are 20 cents each, and we have all the 57 that have been issued thus far. Since 1966 we have them in bound volumes at 3.00 each.

Go to Australia!

The World Convention of Churches of Christ, which meets only every five years, is to assemble in Adelaide, South Australia in October of 1970. This convention is within the framework of the Disciples of Christ, but effort is being made to make it a gathering of all facets of the Restoration Movement. That the next assembly is to be in Australia is especially significant to the Churches of Christ in this country, for our people will find much in common with our brethren in the country down-under. This could be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for you to make a great trip, with chances for side trips on the way down and back. Moreover it would provide a unique opportunity to meet a part of our great brotherhood that we have neglected.

Tours are being arranged that fit the pocketbook even of one with a modest income. Write us if you think you might go and we'll share more of the details with you. One important detail is that the disciples in Australia are hopeful of opening their homes to us from the States. What an experience that would be, sharing in the common life with native Australians!

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

BOOK NOTES

Captives of the Word by Louis and Bess Cochran is for the brotherhood of disciples the most important publication of 1969. This is the Louis Cochran that gave us *The Fool of God* and *Raccoon John Smith,* important historical novels on the early days of our Movement. Now the Cochrans are writing real history, but with a style that is quick and lively. It starts with the European roots of the Restoration Movement and continues through the developments of this century. One chapter is on "The Church with Three Faces." Long years of research, in which a lot of us from all the various segments lent a helping hand, has led to a volume that is impartially factual and highly informative. To read the book will make you appreciative of the liberty-loving personalities that have blessed our past. It will also make you more sensitive as to what our future might be. 360 pages. 5.95.

For some reason we had difficulty getting enough copies of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Heaven* by Gary Freeman. Some of our customers had to wait a long time for their books. But now we have an ample stock, and so you can get this interesting book for 3.95. Those who would also like to have *Are You Going to Church More but Enjoying It Less* by the same author, we can supply it for 2.95.

We are pleased to be able to make this special offer: three books by Elton Trueblood for only 6.00. They are *The Humour of Christ, The Incendiary Fellowship,* and *The Company of the Committed.* These are lively, relevant, and informative. You will be highly pleased.

For only 1.95 we will send you *College Ruined Our Daughter,* a first-hand report of the alienation between parents and young people today. It is a college girl's letters to her parents back home. An eye-opening experience for every parent, and you should read it (preferably) *before* your off-spring goes away to college.

The Meaning of Life in Five Great Religions tells in an interesting way what the world religions are all about. If you feel inadequate in your understanding of the religion of the *majority* of people in the world, the non-Christian religions, this book is more than a beginning. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam are all presented along-side our own Jewish-Christian religion. Only *1.95.*

The Adventure of Living by Paul Tournier is the kind of "help you to live" books that our readers like to know about. Tournier is one of the great writers in the area of meaningful living, being concerned with such subjects as the healing of persons, guilt and grace, and the whole person in a broken world. In this book he delves into the Christian's *adventure* with life. He talks about how to deal with failure, the meaning of commitment,

and security. Especially interesting are chapters on “For Better, for Worse,” “The Meaning of Work,” and “The Adventure of God.” Even though in hardcover it is only 3.75.

“The Living Word Commentary” promises to be a handsome as well as informative production. It is published by the R. B. Sweet Co. in Austin. The latest addition is *Galatians* by Robert L. Johnson, who does an excellent job in identifying the works of the flesh and fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5. The introductory material presents helpful information on the sticky problems of the letter’s background without being tedious. We happen to know too that the commentary is the work of a very fine person, which helps to make books what they should be. The price is 3.50 for this as well as the two others now available. J. W. Roberts’ *The Letters of John* and Abe Malherbe’s *The New Testament World.* These are all scholarly enough to move in any circle and sufficiently nontechnical to be of value to all of us.

For 2.50 we will send you *Disciple Preaching in the First Generation,* by Dwight E. Stevenson and published by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. It is a study of preaching as done by the Restoration pioneers. The author shows how Campbell distinguished between *preaching,* which was for the world, and *teaching,* which was for the church, and in an appendix defends this position in the light of modern research. He asserts that if we followed Campbell’s view of preaching, defended in our time by such scholars as C. H. Dodd and Michel Philibert, it would revolutionize our pulpits and save us from formalism, clericalism, bureaucracy, and ritualistic sterility. So you can see the little book says something.

I fear that *Christians Only* by James Deforest Murch is not being read by our people as it should be. It is a lucid account of the Restoration Movement from its earliest beginnings until now. Though nearly 400 pages it is only 3.50 in attractive paperback.

If you want to put your teeth into some current theological thought relative to the crises of our time, let me suggest *Reconciliation in Today’s World.* It is so up-to-date that it is the basis for a conference in Africa that hasn’t even taken place yet! Only 1.95 in paperback.

CARL KETCHERSIDE IN DALLAS

Those in and near Dallas who have been hopeful of hearing Carl Ketcherside will be pleased to learn that he will take part in a unity meeting to be held at Dallas Christian College, Ford Rd., off LBJ, Jan. 12-13. There will also be brethren on the program from other major wings of our Movement, discussing freely some of the issues that confront us. You may call Dick Smith for further information at 371-7501, or the college at 241-3371.

This volume of *Restoration Review* will be bound into an attractive 200-page book, with introduction and table of contents and dust jacket with the title *Renewal through Recovery.* The price is 3.00, but you need send no money now. You should reserve your copy now

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

RESTORATION REVIEW is published monthly (except July and August) at 1201 Windsor Dr., Denton, Texas. Leroy Garrett, Editor. Second class permit at Denton, Texas. Subscription rate is $1.00 per annum; 50 cents in clubs of 6 or more.

Address all mail to: 1201 Windsor Drive, Denton, Texas 76201.*